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AUTHOR	Ahmad, Iftikhar
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ABSTRACT

Embedded in political scientists' research findings are three propositions for educators: (1) democracy needs democrats; (2) democrats are created through citizenship education programs emphasizing conflict resolution skills, respect for human rights, good neighborliness and respect for pluralism; and (3) there appears to be a correlation between the teaching of democratic values and peaceful co-existence of citizens of democratic societies. This paper examines the significance of the three propositions. The paper suggests that in some form, citizenship education has always been an essential component of the U.S. public school curricula inculcating patriotism, nationalism, and U.S. exceptionalism. In the meantime, however, a systematic effort toward preparing a peace-loving citizenry has been lacking in curricula, often viewed as extraneous to the public school mission. It contends that, considering the post-Cold War turbulence and growing U.S. involvement in global geopolitics, this is a propitious moment for K-12 educators to consider a more useful and sophisticated definition of citizenship, one that is germane to the educational needs of adolescents growing up in an interdependent world, and that transcends the prevailing juridical and legalistic boundaries. The paper discusses tradition and liberalism in citizenship education, citizens and international conflicts, participatory democracy and civil society, and education for democratic citizenship and peace. It concludes that citizenship education programs should teach democratic values, democratic disposition (which refers to personal attributes such as caring for the weak in society, speaking truth to power, and respecting cultural differences), civic participation skills, and peace education skills. (Contains 20 references.) (BT)

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Education for Democratic Citizenship and Peace

Iftikhar Ahmad

Liberal political scientists have discovered a correlation between democratic societies and global peace. Tracing the history of peaceful co-existence of nations, this research shows that citizens' views in democratic societies play a pivotal role in matters of war and peace (Doyle, 1997). Embedded in political scientists' research findings are three propositions for educators: first, democracy needs democrats; second, democrats are created through citizenship education programs emphasizing conflict resolution skills, respect for human rights, good neighborliness and respect for pluralism; third, there appears to be a correlation between the teaching of democratic values and peaceful co-existence of citizens of democratic societies. In this paper I examine the significance of the three propositions.

I begin by suggesting that in some form citizenship education has always been an essential component of the American public school curricula inculcating patriotism, nationalism and American exceptionalism (Massialas, 1967). In the meantime, however, a systematic effort toward preparing a peace-loving citizenry has been lacking in curricula…it was often viewed as extraneous to the public school mission (Harris, 1988; 2002). Indeed, it would be fair to argue that in a stratified social order in which the military-industrial complex leads the nation's foreign policy agenda and where high-stake tests determine the educational achievement of young citizens, it is unlikely that education for idealistic goals, such as global peace and human rights would find respectability in public schools. It should come as no surprise then that for an extended period of time the citizenship education component of American public school curricula was designed to prepare an apolitical citizen. An apolitical citizen was expected to be deferential to the government: he/she was also expected to support a stratified social order. Because the prevalent citizenship education models lacked teaching about dissent and critical thinking, some contemporary observers of citizenship education characterized this vision as the "cardboard model of citizenship" (APSA, 1996, p756). In essence, one could argue that since traditionalism did not sufficiently emphasize citizens' active participation in civic life, it promoted a thin conception of democracy. A thin democracy is less participatory.

Nonetheless, considering the post-Cold War turbulence and growing American involvement in global geopolitics, it is a propitious moment for K-12 educators to consider a more useful and sophisticated definition of citizenship. A useful and sophisticated definition of citizenship is one that is germane to the educational

needs of adolescents growing up in an interdependent world, and which also transcends the prevailing juridical and legalistic boundaries. When thinking about a useful and sophisticated definition of citizenship, perhaps it becomes necessary to re-examine the conventional meaning of patriotism...one that demanded citizens' consent in all circumstances. In a true democratic culture, however, patriotism should be defined and understood more broadly and intelligently. The definition of patriotism should embrace citizens' respect for democratic values and principles, including his/her right to dissent.

Traditionalism and Liberalism in Citizenship Education

Popular paradigms of citizenship education emphasize transmission of knowledge about the structure and functions of government. Although knowledge about the American Constitution and the three branches of government is necessary, it alone is insufficient for preparing thoughtful, caring and peace-loving citizens. For instance, government-centered citizenship education programs represent the traditionalist worldview in political science and have been deemed inadequate for meeting students' educational needs (APSA, 1996). It is important to note that the late nineteenth century founders of the traditionalist worldview in political science, Francis Lieber and John Burgess, followed the Hegelian philosophical vision underscoring the centrality of the nation-state in human affairs (Brown, 1951). It was a view, which philosopher John Dewey (1983) not only vehemently opposed, he considered it "just a paper preparation for citizenship" (p160). In addition, the traditionalist vision of citizenship, as articulated by the founding fathers of political science, defined citizenship in narrow, legalist, and masculine terms: they excluded many vital issues from the discourse on citizenship, including the civil rights of women and non-European population as well as cultural and identity rights. Because in the traditionalist vision the Rosetta stone of citizenship education was the transmission of knowledge about the nation-state and its institutions, it immanently emphasized citizens' complete allegiance to the existing political system. Dissent or diversity was viewed with suspicion. However, in the twenty-first century, as the world is becoming increasingly interdependent and cultural diversity is on the rise in America, the traditionalist vision of citizenship may be losing its intellectual luster.

The traditionalist vision is narrow and limited. Also, the traditionalist vision is premised on the notion of Hobbesian pessimism in that it postulates an anarchic international state system, assuming the world to be a messy place in which life is nasty, brutish and short (Morgenthau, 1948; Waltz, 1959). Nevertheless, education, especially citizenship education, should be about hope, global peace and mutual cooperation. Therefore, incorporating pessimistic notions of traditionalist vision seem inadequate in citizenship education

curricula because they lack the wherewithal to inspire adolescents to develop a sanguine attitude about the human condition.

In contrast with the traditionalist vision, liberal political scientists portray an optimistic vision of the world...one that educators could use in citizenship education programs. The liberal vision is pluralist, global and future-oriented; it jettisons the traditionalist proposition that humans are inherently quarrelsome and the world is a chaotic place. The liberal vision emphasizes the rule of law and not the rule of force in international relations. Unlike the traditionalist state-centered vision, the liberal vision is citizen-centered. The citizen-centered vision seeks to engage citizens in decision making on war and peace. This vision assigns a pivotal role to citizens' democratic ideals and disposition in building a cooperative civil society. Indeed, it opens doors to possibilities for peace by prescribing an open dialogue among the diverse citizens of the world. The liberal vision assumes that nation-states are not molecular bodies engaged in a perpetual struggle for survival: in the liberal vision, citizens of democratic societies cooperate and use deliberative methods for resolving global and domestic conflicts.

In particular, using citizen as a unit of analysis, the liberal vision is mainly concerned with the question of appropriate civic skills a citizen must learn to influence political leaders' policies on war and peace. To this end, the liberal vision is premised on three assumptions: 1) an apathetic and ill-informed citizenry creates conducive conditions for chauvinist leaders to make harmful decisions, 2) a strong civil society provides resistance to the coercive power of government, and 3) democratic citizens can play a positive role in minimizing violent conflicts and restoring trust between citizens of different societies. These three assumptions provide the conceptual foundation for education for democratic citizenship and peace (EDCP), a new vision proposed in the paper.

Citizens and International Conflicts

Since Thucydides's *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, historians have identified a plethora of variables that cause conflicts between nations. These variables include inter-state alliances, arms race between nations, misperception, territorial expansionism, economic competition, mercantilism, jingoism, xenophobia, racism, imperialism, colonialism, religion, ideological disagreements, irredentism, struggle for the control of economic resources, past history, exploitation, aggressive leadership, technology, and so forth. Aside from these variables, the decision to wage war is in any case made by individuals holding an enormous amount of power over people. Hitler in Germany, Stalin in the Soviet Union and Saddam Hussein in Iraq--are just a few

examples of how nationalism and ideology were exploited by despotic leaders for controlling people and using violence against other nations.

Indeed, despotic regimes are secretive and they hardly ask for citizens' opinion. Their goal is to maintain a tight control over citizens. This is achieved through propaganda and misinformation campaigns. Citizens who show courage, question policymakers' irrational policies and demand alternative ways of conflict resolution, are invariably coerced and silenced. In this regard, the eighteenth century German philosopher Immanuel Kant argued that it was easier for kings, monarchs and despots to declare wars because wars did not cost them anything. The despotic rulers considered themselves proprietors of the state and all its resources. In the despotic rulers' view, people were not citizens—they were subjects; despots did not consider themselves accountable to their subjects. Kant argued that despotic rulers may decide to go to war on a pleasure party for the most trivial reasons, and with perfect indifference leave the justification to the diplomatic corps who were ever ready to provide it. But a republic, on the other hand, explores all avenues to a peaceful resolution of conflict simply because its citizens would rather till their farms, work in their professions and enjoy leisure with their families than to fight, pay the costs of war by paying more taxes, repair the devastation the war leaves behind, and to load themselves with heavy debts.

According to Kant, a republican form of government was one in which rulers ruled with citizens' consent: it is accountable to citizens. Citizens of a republic enjoyed the right to free speech and protest. Citizens of non-democratic polities, on the other hand, did not enjoy the basic citizenship rights and hence had little contribution to the civic life. Although Kant preferred the republican form of government to democracy, it is important to remember that his frame of reference was the eighteenth century political world. Several centuries after Kant's *Perpetual Peace* was introduced, the concept of citizenship has undergone many transformations. Indeed, today, and for the future, the most desirable and powerful concept that will help nations live in peace is the concept of democratic citizenship. It is so because other alternatives have caused more abominable tragedies than the human mind can imagine. For example, the first half of the twentieth century was the bloodiest in human history because European societies lived under nationalism and fascism. Similarly, during the last two decades of the twentieth century nationalist hatred caused internecine conflicts in Afghanistan, Chechnya, Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Burundi, and the Middle East, demonstrating in the clearest terms that the absence of democratic citizenship and civil society could lead to utter devastation and destruction of hope for many innocent people.

Participatory Democracy and Civil Society

The question of war and peace is inextricably linked with the way a citizenry governs itself. A self-governing citizenry, for example, would address civic problems, participate in public policy making and engage in activities for public good. Members of such a participatory civic system empower themselves by improving their collective lot. On his short visit to the United States in the 1930s, a young Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville, noted that Americans solved their community problems by forming voluntary associations and that government agencies were nowhere to be seen. Tocqueville observed democracy in action--a phenomenon that later became known as civil society. Civil society can be defined as a space between government, corporations and family allowing non-profit voluntary associations to work towards the common good. A strong civil society reflects a strong participatory democracy and participatory democracy is a model of civic life in which citizens govern themselves. To suggest that in a participatory democracy citizens govern themselves, we are in fact saying that citizens take charge of their own destinies by exercising their right to organize and elect leaders for the legislature. Moreover, the elected leaders are dependent upon the voters' free will. In essence, democracy is the rule of law and not the rule of men. More importantly, in democracies, like other public policies, war is also treated as a matter of public policy requiring an open debate and citizens' consent. Citizens exercise their power and fulfill their citizenship obligation by expressing their opinions on the question of war and peace. Democratic citizenship is therefore about the empowerment of citizens and the building of a strong civil society.

Moreover, civil society is a countervailing force to the power of the government (Diamond, 1994). Voluntary associations are concerned with public issues, such as education, the environment, human rights and global peace, and are organized without the coercive influence of the government or businesses. Some examples of voluntary associations are the National Organization for Women, the Sierra Club, and Mothers against Drunk Driving. These organizations are civic associations. The main mission of these civic associations is educational: they educate the citizenry in an informal way by raising their awareness about public issues. They collect data, articulate demands, lobby legislators and, if necessary, seek remedy through the courts. In short, civic associations are organized by democratic citizens.

Education for Democratic Citizenship and Peace

Education for democratic citizenship (EDCP) is a liberal citizen-centered educational vision seeking to prepare caring, thoughtful, peace-loving, conscientious, independent-minded and active citizens. In order to

achieve these objectives, any EDCP curriculum must include the teaching and learning of six essential skills: 1) civic knowledge about local and global issues, 2) democratic values, 3) democratic disposition or attitude, 4) civic participation skills, and 5) peace education. The following is a brief elaboration of the five components.

Civic knowledge constitutes the cognitive aspect of local, state, national, and global political issues and makes up the core of citizenship education. A literate citizenry of a democratic polity knows how power is structured, where it is located, how laws are made, and who benefits from public policies at the local, national and global levels. Although the transmission of civic knowledge is necessary, it alone is insufficient for preparing democratic citizens.

Contemporary school curricula offer a limited version of civic knowledge. Similarly, contemporary literature in civic education defines civic knowledge as knowledge about the structure and functions of local, state and national governments. Indeed, this definition is unsophisticated because it papers over knowledge about the diverse citizenry of the United States or people outside its borders. Although the transmission of knowledge about America's civic institutions is vital, a comprehensive and sophisticated definition of civic knowledge would be more pertinent to meet the needs of a culturally heterogeneous society. A new and comprehensive definition of civic knowledge would emphasize knowledge about the diverse racial, ethnic and religious communities in the United States and around the world. Living in peace and harmony with people of different cultures, both at home and abroad is possible only if citizens are knowledgeable about and appreciative of other cultures. In a multicultural America, recognition of cultural difference becomes even more important because members of different cultural groups pursue their dreams of life, liberty and happiness according to their own beliefs, traditions, experiences and interpretations. Therefore, civic knowledge also includes familiarity with the macro and micro-cultures of the polity. Also, because America is an integral part of an interdependent world, global events affect American citizens in many ways. The reality of interdependence suggests that knowledge about illiteracy, hunger, global terrorism, religious fanaticism, communal riots, genocide, human rights abuses, women's plight, child labor, human migration, population explosion, environmental degradation, ethnic cleansing, internecine conflicts, famines, diseases, underdevelopment, exploitation by multinational corporations, and oppression of citizens by their own governments are indeed part and parcel of civic knowledge.

The second component of EDCP is the transmission of democratic civic values or what John Patrick (1995) calls civic virtues. Every modern nation-state makes a conscious effort to promote its common civic values among its citizens. These civic values may either be deduced from past historical experiences or

contrived by some leaders. Common civic values fuel the engine of transformation of *pluribus* into *unum*, i.e., they bring about national unity and bind diverse ethnic, cultural and linguistic communities into one polity. Political scientist Dankwart Rustow (1971) posits that a nation cannot embark upon its democratic journey unless it first settles the primary question of its national identity. Common civic values play a vital role in creating a national identity.

Since not all nations are democratic, civic values are defined and understood differently in different political contexts. For example, freedom of religion and assembly are not considered civic values in Saudi Arabia. Similarly, until the twentieth century American civic values did not include suffrage for women and blacks.

Democratic societies cherish democratic civic values that include individual liberty, respect for diverse cultures, respect for human rights, freedom of religion and speech, social, economic and gender equality, accountability, protection for weaker groups, and the rule of law. In societies with authoritarian culture, on the other hand, civic values underscore respect for strong leadership, fear of authority and acceptance of the status quo. Little respect is given to public opinion. Because authoritarian regimes are not democratically elected, they are not accountable to their citizens for their deeds or misdeeds. Authoritarian regimes impose their decisions from the top without public participation. Whereas democratic societies encourage open dialogue on public and controversial issues, authoritarian societies discourage citizens' critical thinking and open discussions on issues of public interest.

In the United States, some of the sources of core democratic civic values are the Declaration of Independence, Bill of Rights, Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address, and Martin Luther King Jr.'s speeches about civil rights, among others. All educational institutions must make deliberate efforts to teach about civic values in a systematic and critical fashion. Because democracy in America is a work in progress, civic values incorporated in these historical documents are open to fresh interpretations in different periods and contexts.

For the most part democratic civic values could be more humane and authentic than non-democratic civic values. Democratic civic values build communities and uplift human dignity. Democratic civic values are moral values that underscore compassion, justice and fairness. Democratic civic values seek peaceful resolution of conflicts through open dialogues. Democratic civic values foster respect for human dignity. Democratic civic values are about respecting people who may worship a different deity or speak a different language or may have a different skin color. Democratic civic values are about sharing and looking after the needy and weaker members of the community. Democratic civic values instill courage in citizens to speak truth to power.

Democratic civic values constitute the core of education for democratic citizenship and, therefore, they must be incorporated into school curricula at an early stage.

Democratic disposition or attitude is the third component of education for democratic citizenship. Because the goal of education for democratic citizenship is to prepare democratic citizens, democratic citizens are, therefore, those who exemplify core democratic values by their behavior and attitude. Clinton Rossiter (1950) identifies some characteristics of democratic citizens. For example, democratic citizens are respectful of ethnic and cultural diversity. They are aware of the rights and obligations of citizenship. They are compassionate and caring. They are well informed about community problems and public policy issues. They take an active and constructive role in their community working for the common good. They obey just laws and protest against unjust laws. They protect the environment. They volunteer for community service and cooperative with others in just causes. They accept defeat with honor and show courage to speak truth to power. They promote social justice and equity. They protect the rights of weaker groups in the community. They act honestly. They act locally but think globally. They respect others' privacy. They vote in local and national elections. In democratic societies, it is the responsibility of public schools to cultivate these values.

The fourth component of education for democratic citizenship is civic participation skills. Citizens of a democratic society use civic participation skills that are qualitatively different from participation skills needed in non-democratic societies. Non-democratic forms of government, such as dictatorship, monarchy or fascism need not rely on citizens' opinion simply because public policy decisions are made for them by a handful of unelected political leaders. However, participatory democracies are qualitatively different in that they are responsive to citizens' preferences. In democratic societies, public policy decisions are made by consensus and after intensive debates.

Democracies need voters' participation. No democracy can survive or be even conceived without active participants. But active participants are not born; they are created through formal and informal education. Civic participation in a democracy is not limited to voting alone. Although voting in periodic elections is most essential for civic participation, it is the minimum of what a good citizen should do. In a democratic society civic participation has a deeper meaning--citizens are free to pick and choose the forms of participation. Citizens can join any political or civic organization. If they wish, they can organize their own civic association for a public cause. They may choose to launch a civic disobedience movement or join a protest rally against government policies on war or some other issue. Citizens can also write letters to newspapers and call radio and television talk shows to vent their views on issues of public interest. The significance of citizens' participation

is to make the governmental system accountable to citizens. Because there are many public issues that concern young citizens, it is vital that young citizens speak out and take action in their own interest. It is therefore necessary that civic participation skills should be taught both in elementary and in secondary schools. Those skills include organizing and conducting a public meeting, preparing agenda, writing letters to newspapers and politicians, public speaking, conducting opinion polls, campaigning, leadership and volunteering. Without having learnt civic participation skills, it is difficult for citizens to play a constructive role in a democratic society.

The final component of EDCP is peace education. As it was noted earlier, democracy and peace are inter-related and interdependent concepts. For example, EDCP assumes that a democratic citizen is also a peace-loving citizen because he or she resolves conflicts through reasoning, deliberation and dialogue. Whereas traditional definition of democracy hinges on competitiveness, EDCP emphasizes sharing and cooperation. A democratic citizen views politics as common good for benefits of the whole community; he or she does not view politics as a zero sum game in which contenders seek to destroy each another.

Peace education is about building a better tomorrow for all human beings regardless of their ethnic identity, color of skin, religion, or place of birth. Peace education is about affirming human dignity. As part of school programs peace education may be defined as a component of citizenship education that explains the roots of violence in society and the world; it teaches alternatives to violence and provides effective skills for resolving conflicts, such as negotiation, reconciliation, nonviolent struggle, and the use of international agreements (Harris 2002). Peace education is a dynamic model in that it emphasizes active involvement of citizens in civic life of the community, both at local and global levels. Peace education is also about social justice, equality and human rights because it assumes that in order to prevent violence there has to be a just and equitable distribution of scarce resources. Similarly, peace education is about caring for and protection of the weak in society. In other words, peace education cherishes all democratic values and virtues. In the context of pedagogy, because peace education is philosophically akin to the Roussouean model of naturalism, it requires that teachers discard authoritarian models of teaching and respect students' interests. Some notable proponents of peace education are Maria Montessori (1946), Johan Galtung (1996), Betty Reardon (1988) and Ian Harris (1988; 2002).

Conclusion

Three useful propositions may be extrapolated from liberal political scientists' research on democratic peace: first, democracy needs democrats; second, democrats are not born—they are created through citizenship education; and third, there is a strong correlation between good citizenship values and peace. If incorporated into citizenship education programs, these three propositions have the potential to transform public schools' civic mission.

This paper argues that one of the main goals of traditionalist citizenship education curricula has been the preparation of patriotic citizens. Although, in itself, preparing patriotic citizens is an admirable task--it alone is insufficient. Moreover, being patriotic does not necessarily mean that a citizen must support his/her government's belligerent policies. True patriotism requires citizens to do what they think would be in the best interest of peace among and between different nations and peoples. When necessary, patriotic citizens also exercise their right to dissent by participating in non-violent civic disobedience rallies.

Moreover, because young people in the twenty-first century live in an inter-connected and an interdependent world, events outside the country affect them both directly and indirectly. Hence, to provide students with practical civic skills for enhancing democracy, perhaps the goals of existing citizenship education programs should also include promoting a more sophisticated vision of citizenship. As opposed to the traditionalist and juridical vision of citizenship, the new vision should be citizen-centered. The citizen-centered vision would integrate democratic values and peace. In essence, the pursuit of peace will be considered vital to good citizenship.

Thus, citizenship education programs should seek to prepare not just patriotic citizens but peace-loving democratic citizens. This would be possible when educators emphasize the rationale of teaching about the vision incorporated in education for democratic citizenship and peace. Education for democratic citizenship is citizen-centered seeking to prepare democratic citizens that are multi-dimensional in their knowledge, values, disposition and skills. More specifically, education for democratic citizenship and peace redefines civic knowledge by expanding its scope and including knowledge about diverse communities and micro-cultures. Civic knowledge, as defined in this vision, transcends the mere transmission of knowledge about the structure and functions of government. It uses social science methods for analytical understanding of the roots of conflicts in different cultural settings.

The second component of education for democratic citizenship is democratic values. Democratic values refer to citizens' belief in justice, liberty, equality, and the rule of law. The third component of education

for democratic citizenship and peace is democratic disposition, which refers to certain personal attributes such as caring for the weak in society, speaking truth to power, respecting cultural differences, obeying just laws and protesting against unjust laws, and accepting defeat with honor. The fourth component is civic participation skills, which include voting in elections, making alliances with other organizations, organizing campaigns, leadership, and using the press effectively for articulating demands. The final and, indeed, the most critical component of education for democratic citizenship is peace education. Peace education is defined as vital component of the citizenship education curriculum containing content knowledge and pedagogy that identifies the roots of violence, teaches skills for peaceful resolution of conflicts and inspires students to live in peace with self and with diverse individuals and communities everywhere.

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